

The Dingbat Family

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'Tis Werry, Werry Troo!



Polly and Her Pals

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You Couldn't Blame Pa



THE RED BUTTON

A MYSTERY STORY OF NEW YORK

By WILL IRWIN

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(Continued from Wednesday.)

But John spoke no more.

"He may grow stronger after a time," said the voice of Doctor Carver. "If this poor earth vessel through which we speak does not break." So he finished the pertinent part of that session.

The seances were coming every day now. Miss Estrilla wished it; and Rosalie granted her request with an appearance of indulgent reluctance. The next day, John intruded again. This time, it appeared, he had grown strong enough to speak consecutively. "I have not full power yet. But it is coming. I grow stronger. But the shock in my breast—I feel it." That was something of a venture. Rosalie waited to see what reply it would draw.

The reply came, quick and puzzling. "Did that come first then? Oh, surely you didn't feel that?" asked Miss Estrilla as though in a fever of anxiety.

Rosalie, thinking like lightning, felt herself for the moment at her wits' ends. Upon the answer to that cryptic question everything might depend. It were best, she concluded, to humor Miss Estrilla; to give her what she wanted, but to make the wording vague. She let her body heave, as though John were retaining his control with difficulty.

"No," said the voice, "that was not first. It had come already. But, somehow—I knew."

"Oh, thank God!" cried Miss Estrilla.

John departed on this. Doctor Carver and Laughing-Eyes spread clouds of mist, intellectual but rosy. They went; Rosalie entered that apparent sleep with which she concluded her "trances." As she lay there, with nothing to do but think, this new perplexity revolved itself in her mind. What meant that sudden question—"Did that come first?" The trail was leading into wildernesses of which she had never dreamed.

Rosalie held three more seances with Miss Estrilla before she reached the final vital one to which all her diplomacies had been leading. Let me omit the lumber and packing, as yawns, mumbblings, long passages of sleep, solemn orations of Doctor Carver, babblings of Laughing-Eyes, revelations concerning the family life of Miguel and Victoria. Let me but report those little dialogues between

John in the spirit, and Miss Estrilla (or Margarita Perez) in the flesh, to which this hocus-pocus was only an approach.

John is speaking through the lips of Rosalie Le Grange; and Miss Estrilla is answering.

"I am stronger now. The flesh influence is not yet gone from me. There was much on my soul. I find it hard to forgive. And I know I must—little lady." Rosalie had learned from Constance that "little lady" was Capt. Hanks's pet name for woman in tender relations, and she let it out as a venture.

"Oh, John! But consider how much I have to forgive. Ah, did you ever love me? You never answered my letters."

"I loved you perhaps too much. Over here, we can not lie. I was carried away—and I was married—"

"Yes. Every one knows that now. You deceived me. It is harder for me to forgive than the other thing."

"Yes—but I loved you too much—to risk telling you."

"Was that why you kept the jewels, then?" A hard attack came into Miss Estrilla's tone. It was more than a question; there was irony in it. Rosalie thought rapidly. That diamond buckle on the stair-case—"the jewels"—here was a startling correlation of facts. She must venture no further; she must have time to imagine and to plan.

"I can not tell you now," said the voice of John. "I am—growing weak—I sinned—"

"Oh, he's gone away!" broke in the voice of Laughing-Eyes.

Another seance. John is speaking, Miss Estrilla answering.

"Ah, I really love you. But I find it hard to forgive."

"Don't you understand, John, that it wasn't revenge. It was duty."

"I know. There is much that I do not understand, but I do understand that. In the flesh, I was always attracted by the glitter of jewels—" This was a lead into territory only partially explored. And the road opened.

"I think there were two parts of you, John. But, oh, the better part loved me, did it not?"

"Yes, loved you truly, little lady."

"John, if you had stolen them outright—but to use my love—"

"I am going. I am not strong enough yet to endure reproach—"

"Oh, I will not reproach you again. You must forgive. You know how little you have to forgive. Wait, John, wait!"

John is speaking again: Miss Estrilla replies.

"They give me new strength every day. But this poor ignorant woman is weakening. Why did you try to



"A MAN IS THE MOST EASILY LED CREATURE IN THE WORLD."

BY BILLIE BURKE.

I had a letter from a married woman today, in which she told me she had found that she and her husband were not affinites—she had outgrown him.

Of course, I may not speak from experience, but it seems to me that the married woman who insists upon her husband doing all the changing for the better will never be the mistress of a happy home. The same may be said of the wife who bemoans that fact that she didn't find her affinity before she was married. Men may give ear to such women, but they never respect them and they won't listen any longer than they are obliged to.

As a rule, it seems to me the husbands outgrow the wives. This is really the most hopeful of all the misfits, because the wife is more apt to see what has gone wrong and rectify it. Husbands seldom can be depended upon to help remedy domestic infelicity.

The sensible wife should waste very little time in trying to make over her husband. She should realize that, if there is to be a change for the better, it must be brought about through her unaided efforts. After giving the matter a little intelligent thought she will see that it is not so difficult as it seemed at first. If she happens to have any of the "sportsman" in her nature she will find this new pastime far more absorbing than bridge or shopping.

A man is the most easily led creature in the world if only one knows how to go about it. Any silly girl could testify as to that if she had brains enough to think about it at all. I have made a few rules in these days of conquest that I consider valuable. When I marry I shall try them.

Want to know them?

Well, never complain to your husband of his lack of affection.

Never suggest that he cares less for you than he used to; if you want more affection go in and win it. He hasn't

a chance against you if you understand your game. Remember that love is something one cannot demand simply because it is one's right.

Never waste time in jealousy—jealousy deprives you of your own charms and heightens the charms of the other woman by power of contrast.

Many a woman has loved her husband devotedly and made him miserable every day she lived with him.

"What man is worth all this trouble?" you ask.

Perhaps, not one in the universe, my dear, if you look at it in your own way.

But I am sure that if I were married I would prefer love to indifference; I would prefer a happy home to a cheerless hearth.

If you are going to marry and live with a man, why not get all the comfort you can out of the arrangement? The man, taken as a unit, may not be worth the trouble; but the man, plus love, a happy home and your own happiness, are worth all you could possibly give in payment.

would be wrong—and because of Juan!"

Rosalie noted how the name of Juan came in again. For caution, she must veer away from that lead at present.

"I think that I felt you near me at times."

"Did you, John? Did you know I was in your room once when you were asleep? Do you remember how you slept through the fire at home? That was why I dared. There was light on your face. I wanted to kiss it."

"If you had—and awakened me?"

"If I had—if I only had!" Miss Estrilla wept bitterly; the voice of John answered with caressing reassuring words.

"But John, why can you not forgive? Don't you know all?" continued Miss Estrilla when she had control of her voice.

"Not all. We do not wake to the spirit at once. After the shock, we are in a mist for a time. I knew nothing until I was looking down on the people who surrounded my body—a long time after. Then there were mists and dark spots. I saw one of the jewels on the floor beside the door. I could not see you—nor Juan. I must know—this is hard—I am growing weak—"

"Wait, John wait!" cried Miss Estrilla, for the first time losing control of herself. "John! Come back! You must come back! I've something to tell you that's killing me! John, John, you must know that he didn't mean to do it!"

With all the will-power that she had, Rosalie kept herself from the slightest movement when she heard that simple startling pronoun, "he." It was time to close this seance. She summoned Laughing-Eyes, who bade Miss Estrilla good-by in a weak faltering tone, she settled into her concluding "trance."

In the last two sittings, Rosalie had been awakening from trance of her own accord. Now, she slumbered on for two or three minutes before she let her eyes flutter open; her face resumed expression.

Miss Estrilla had controlled her weeping. To Rosalie's cheerful, "Well, was I out long?" she returned no answer. Rosalie looked at her sharply.

"I'm afraid you shouldn't do this any more—in your state of nerves," she said. "Only reason I've kept it up was because it seemed to be doing you so much good. But today you look all tuckered out. An' me—a wet rag is cast-iron beside my feeling this minute. Tell me—was it long after I stopped talking before I woke up?"

"No. It was shorter than ever before."

"M-hm! Well, those that know me better than I know myself have watched my trances. They say that when I wake up soon after the spirits go, it means just one thing—it means I'm running down. This mediumship is like a bucket in the rain. You pour out the water, an' you've got to wait a while for the bucket to fill again. When I begun sittin' with you, I had more in me than I thought. Fact is, I'd just begun to over flow, which is why I couldn't stop that first trance from comin'. But now it's about spilled out. Trance ain't a relief any longer. It's been a strain on me for three sittin's, an' now that it's beginnin' to tell on you, we'd both better stop it, I guess."

But Miss Estrilla raised the eye-lids shade, and Rosalie saw that she was weeping again. "Oh, just another! Join you now—I dare not—because it

Grange? There was something more I wanted to ask. Something," she went on, "which would seem trivial to you. But to me—"

"Now, my dear," interrupted Rosalie, "I don't want to know anything about what the spirits are sayin' to you. That's your secret." She appeared to hesitate over a decision. "Now, I'll tell you what I'll do. I've probably got just one more sittin' in me, an' then I'll be through. Sometimes, by sort of reachin' out toward the spirit on the night before—I can't make you understand, I guess, you not being mediumistic—I can make the trance stronger—bring more, they tell me. I'll git in touch with the spirit tonight, an' I'll set with you tomorrow for the last time this spell. Then I must quit. I'm keepin' a boardin'-house, not practisin' professional."

"I'm very grateful," said Miss Estrilla, "more grateful than you can ever understand."

"I know you are. That's why I'm doin' this, I suppose," said Rosalie. "There ain't any too much gratitude in this world."

"Why, I feel as weak as water—and I must look after the ironin', too," she added as she moved listlessly toward the door.

(To be continued.)

News-Times Daily Fashion



A Neat Dress For the Growing Girl. Girl's Dress With Long or Shorter Sleeve.

Shepherd's check in brown and white woolen with facings of brown was used for this model. It would also develop well in blue serge with red trimming or with a simple finish of soutache braid. The waist fronts open over a vest that meets a deep collar at the neck edge. The pattern is cut in four sizes: 8, 10, 12 and 14 years. It requires 3½ yards of 44 inch material for a 10-year size. A pattern of this illustration mailed to any address on receipt of 10c in silver or stamps.

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